

Part of

Education and childcare during coronavirus



Guidance

Guidance for educational and childcare settings in Leicester and the affected parts of Leicestershire

Published 1 July 2020

- Contents
- Local co-ordination and collaboration
- Confirm which children and young people should and should not attend educational settings
- Attendance expectations
- Recording attendance in the school attendance register
- Staffing and communication
- Infection prevention and control
- Getting to and from educational settings and travel supporting children's social care services
- School meals
- Curriculum

In light of the local outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Leicester, the government has taken action to control the spread of the virus in both Leicester and the affected surrounding areas. People in this area have been asked to stay at home as much as they can, and the government has recommended against all but essential travel.

From 2 July, we are therefore asking educational and early years settings<sup>1</sup> to remain open only for priority groups- children and young people who are vulnerable, and the children of critical workers who absolutely need to attend- as they did at the beginning of this outbreak when national lockdown measures were in place.

Fewer children and young people making the journey to educational settings, and fewer children and young people in these settings, will help to control the virus in these circumstances.

The decision to ask educational settings to limit their operations has not been taken lightly. We appreciate the extraordinary work that all school and college<sup>2</sup> leaders, their early years colleagues and educational staff have done throughout this outbreak, and are keenly aware that a return to more limited school, early years and college provision will be deeply frustrating as many children have returned since 1 June. We appreciate the impact these measures will have on parents and carers too, and the disruption they may face as a result of their child no longer being able to attend their school, college or nursery during the local lockdown. However, we consider these measures to be an important part of our overall response if we are to control the spread of the virus and protect lives in the current context.

This guidance sets out the key actions that schools, colleges and early years providers in Leicester and its surrounding areas should take to prepare for limiting attendance from 2 July 2020. We will work with the local authorities and individual nurseries, schools and colleges to support them follow the public health advice.

These local measures will be kept under review, and will be reviewed in 2 weeks. This means that the affected schools will not open more widely to more year groups before they close for the summer holidays.

For more information about the areas affected by the localised lockdown in Leicestershire, please refer to the [increased restrictions for Leicester and parts of Leicestershire announcement](#) on Leicestershire County Council's website, which includes a [PDF map of the areas where increased restrictions are in place](#).

- This document should be read alongside the relevant parts of the following guidance:
- guidance on [implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#), specifically the sections on:
    - effective infection protection and control
    - personal protective equipment
    - requirements on shielding
  - guidance on [safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings](#)
  - guidance on [critical workers](#)
  - guidance about [supporting vulnerable children and young people](#)
  - [guidance for children's social care services](#)

## Local co-ordination and collaboration

We expect early years providers, schools, colleges, local authorities and trusts to work together to ensure that settings are supported to stay open for priority groups. Leicester and Leicestershire local authorities are responsible for working with education settings (including academies and the independent sector), using the [critical worker list](#) and the definition of vulnerable children and young people (set out below) to support early years providers, schools and colleges to ensure that there are enough places for priority groups.

Leicester and Leicestershire local authorities are also responsible for monitoring demand and capacity. This may involve working with educational settings to provide places in alternative settings if necessary, and supporting residential special schools, alternative provision and other special settings to remain open, wherever possible.

If a setting is unable to open for children in priority groups, local authorities, schools, and trusts should work collaboratively to agree the most appropriate solution locally. Regional schools commissioners (RSCs) can support these conversations, and those between local authorities where necessary. We also expect colleges to work collaboratively with these local partners to agree appropriate solutions and the ESFA's local territorial team will also offer support.

## Confirm which children and young people should and should not attend educational settings

We are asking early years providers, schools and colleges in Leicester and the affected parts of Leicestershire to remain open only for priority groups - children of critical workers who absolutely need to attend and all vulnerable children and young people.

All other pupils who are not considered vulnerable, or are not the children of critical workers, including those who have been welcomed back to school as part of wider opening measures since 1 June, should not attend their settings and should remain at home until further notice.

Early years providers, schools and colleges should speak with parents and carers to discuss any changes in the attendance of their children, especially where a child or young person will no longer be able to attend.

For the purpose of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, vulnerable children and young people are currently defined as children and young people who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan and it is determined, following risk assessment, carried out with educational providers and parents, that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who are therefore in need of continued education provision - this might include children on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, adopted children, those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training'), those who are young carers and others at the provider and local authority's discretion

Education settings should work together with parents and other local partners where relevant – including local authorities and social workers - to identify these vulnerable children and decide whether they should continue to attend early years provision, school or colleges and to ensure for children with EHC plans that risk assessments are up to date.

## Attendance expectations

For the period of this local outbreak, we have the same expectations on attendance as were applied during full national lockdown in England between 23 March and 1 June, when early years, schools and colleges were closed to the majority of children and young people.

### For children of critical workers

It is not compulsory to take up the place made available for their child. Early years providers, schools and colleges should speak with parents to discuss what provision is needed as many parents working in critical sectors will be able to ensure their child is kept at home safely and some children of critical workers may need to remain at home for shielding or health reasons. Read the [guidance on shielding](#).

### For vulnerable children and young people

For vulnerable children and young people who have a social worker, or those who are deemed otherwise vulnerable by their early years provider, school, college or local authority, attendance is expected unless the child/household is shielding or clinically vulnerable. For those who have an education health and care (EHC) plan, attendance is expected where it is determined. [Following a risk assessment](#) in consultation with educational settings and parents/carers, that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in their setting.

These expectations apply across all education settings, including early years, schools and colleges.

No one should attend nursery, school or college if they have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or are self-isolating due to symptoms in their household.

## Recording attendance in the school attendance register

Schools in the Leicester and Leicestershire area should continue to submit the [Educational Setting Status form](#) via the online portal to report whether they are open and how many children and staff are in school.

Schools should also continue to record attendance in their usual attendance register and use the following coding during the local lockdown:

- Where a school is closed to all pupils** for a session, schools should record a # code for all pupils (temporarily, code # should be used only for full closure).
- Where a school is open to vulnerable children and children of critical workers**, schools should use the following codes:
  - all pupils who are not eligible or expected to attend a session should be recorded as code X (not required to be in school). This includes children of critical workers whose parents have indicated they will not attend a given session. Temporarily, code X can be used for compulsory school age children – usually it is only used when non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.
  - vulnerable children who are shielding, self isolating or have an education, health and care plan (EHCP) and whose risk assessment says that their needs cannot be safely met in school, should be recorded as code Y (unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances). Temporarily, code Y can be used where a pupil is prevented from attending school due to following government guidance on coronavirus (COVID-19).
  - where a vulnerable child does not attend school for any other reason they should be recorded as absent (but all absence at this time should be authorised) – where no other authorised absence code is appropriate they should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school).

## Staffing and communication

As has been the case throughout this outbreak, early years, school and college leaders should discuss the impact of these local measures with their staff, some of whom may be anxious and may value the opportunity for discussion and reassurance.

During this period of temporary restriction, the number of teachers and school staff needed will vary between education settings. Early years providers, schools and colleges should continue make an assessment of the capacity required as they have been doing through the period of national closures and wider opening, and where in doubt, discuss their needs with the local authority or trust when making decisions.

Where staff are clinically vulnerable, or clinically extremely vulnerable, early years, school and college leaders and settings should continue to follow the advice set out in the [guidance on implementing protective measures](#).

Local settings should also note that the relaxation of shielding measures, due to take effect nationally on the 6 July, will not now take place in Leicester and the surrounding area.

## Infection prevention and control

Schools, nurseries and colleges should continue to follow the guidance on [implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#). This guidance sets out a hierarchy of controls including regular handwashing, good hygiene, frequent cleaning and use of small, distinct groups, that when implemented, create an inherently safer system, where the risk of transmission and infection is substantially reduced.

Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test. [Tests can be booked online](#) or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to internet. Essential workers have priority access to testing including anyone involved in education or childcare. Children aged 11 and under must have the test performed by a parent or carer.

To help prevent the further spread of the virus in Leicester and the surrounding area, the government has deployed four mobile testing units, offered extra capacity at the regional test site and has provided thousands of home testing kits to households.

## Getting to and from educational settings and travel supporting children's social care services

As part of these local restrictions, the government has advised against all non-essential travel to, from and within Leicester and affected parts of Leicestershire.

Critical workers, including education staff (nursery staff, teachers, and social workers) are permitted to travel into/out of Leicester and the affected parts of Leicestershire to go to their jobs, in order to maintain provision for vulnerable children/children of critical workers.

Vulnerable children and young people and children of critical workers are also permitted to travel into/out of Leicester and affected parts of Leicestershire for education/care or, in case of vulnerable children, to attend meeting with social workers/family courts. This includes parents taking children to school.

Vulnerable children and young people and children of critical workers attending school or college during this period should be encouraged to walk or cycle wherever possible and avoid public transport. If public transport is used by children and young people or staff, then those over the age of 11 are required to wear a face covering whilst travelling.

No other children and young people should travel in and out of the restricted area to attend education/care – for example, if you are a child or young person (other than a vulnerable child or child of a critical worker) that lives in Leicester but attends school or college outside the affected area, you must stay at home. Likewise, if you live outside Leicester and travel into the city or the affected parts of Leicestershire for education or childcare, you must stay at home.

## School meals

While these local measures are in place in Leicester, schools should continue to follow the guidance on [supporting children eligible for free schools meals](#) as well as the guidance on the [Summer Food Fund](#).

## Curriculum

Throughout the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, we have given schools the flexibility to provide the support, activities and education that they see fit. We have emphasised the importance of ensuring that children of critical workers and vulnerable children are supervised and properly cared for in educational settings and have clarified that no school will be penalised if they are unable to offer a broad and balanced curriculum during this period. This continues to be the case for the summer term nationally, and for settings in Leicester that are once again limiting their attendance to vulnerable children and the children of critical workers. Curriculum guidance relating to the next academic year will be published shortly.

We want to support schools and parents to ensure children and young people's education can continue remotely. Schools should continue to consult, as appropriate, [section 16 of the guidance for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#) which sets out the support that schools and parents can access to manage the huge challenge of teaching remotely. This includes:

- a list of [remote learning case studies](#)
- a [list of quality assured online resources for home education](#)
- resources made available by the [Oak National Academy](#)
- [BBC Bitesize](#)

Early years settings can direct parents to:

- the Department for Education's [Hungry Little Minds](#) campaign
- the BBC's [Tiny Happy People](#)
- the [National Literacy Trust's Family Zone](#)

The Department for Education has also published further guidance on [how to help children aged 2 to 4 to learn at home during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

1. Throughout this document, the term educational settings is used to refer to a range of educational institutions, including nurseries, childminders, schools and colleges and other post-16 providers. ↩

2. Where this document makes reference to college/s we are referring to all further education providers. ↩

Benefits	Education and learning	How government works
Births, deaths, marriages and care	Employing people	Departments
Business and self-employed	Environment and countryside	Worldwide
Childcare and parenting	Housing and local services	Services
Citizenship and living in the UK	Money and tax	Guidance and regulation
Crime, justice and the law	Passports, travel and living abroad	News and communications
Disabled people	Visas and immigration	Research and statistics
Driving and transport	Working, jobs and pensions	Policy papers and consultations
		Transparency and freedom of information releases